

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1388

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: CSCE: LUNCHEON WITH SOVIET DELEGATION

REF: GENEVA 1097

1. FOLLOWING UP ON REFTEL MEETING, AMB SHERER GAVE LUNCHEON FEB 28 FOR EIGHT RANKING MEMBERS OF SOVIET DELEGATION. IN OPENING TOAST, SHERER RECALLED HIS HOPED THAT US AND SOVIET DELS WOULD CONTINUE AND EXPAND THEIR COOPERATION AND THAT THIS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO ADVANCING THE WORK OF CSCE, WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES CONSIDER AN IMPORTANT STEP IN DETENTE PROCESS.

2. SOVIET DELEGATION HEAD VICE MINISTER KOVALEV, IN REPLY, STRESSED APPRECIATION FOR SHERER'S INITIATIVE, AND EXPRESSED SIMILAR HOPE ABOUT

CONTINUED COOPERATIVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO DELEGATIONS AT ALL LEVELS.

2. LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WAS PRIMARILY SOCIAL, ALTHOUGH SOVIETS TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERLINE THEIR INTEREST IN HAVING A "SKELTON" OF THE FINAL DOCUMENTS IN HAND BEFORE THE EASTER RECESS. IN SOVIET
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VIEW, THERE ARE THREE CATEGORIES OF PROPOSALS: "ACCEPTABLE,

NEGOTIABLE, AND UNACCEPTABLE," AND SOVIETS BELIEVE THAT RETENTION OF "UNACCEPTABLE" PROPOSALS, EVEN WITHIN BRACKETS, WOULD BE "ILLUSORY".

THESE "UNACCEPTABLE" PROPOSALS SHOULD BE ELIMINATED NOW, SO AS NOT TO "MISLEAD" GOVERNMENTS DURING THEIR REVIEW OF PROGRESS AT EASTER.

3. US DEL, IN REPLY, EMPHASIZED THAT SOME DEVICE WOULD BE NEEDED TO COVER SITUATIONS WERE STRONGLY ATTACHED TO A PROPOSAL, AND OTHERS WERE STRONGLY OPPOSED. WITHOUT SUCH A DEVICE, WORK COULD BE SERIOUSLY

DELAYED. THE WAY THE SOVIETS HAD RAISED THIS ISSUE HAD AROUSED THE SUSPICIONS OF SOME WESTERN DELEGATIONS, AND IT WAS NOW NECESSARY TO FIND A COMPROMISE SOLUTION. SOVIETS ADMITTED PRIVATELY THAT THEY HAD RAISED THIS PROBLEM AT THE WRONG MOMENT, AND AGREED TO TRY TO FIND A COMPROMISE.

4. SOVIET AMBASSADOR MENDELEVICH TOLD SHERER PRIVATELY THAT HE THOUGHT CSCE HAD TO BE CONCLUDED BEFORE SUMMER VACATION PERIOD. HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THAT A DELAY BEYOND THIS TIME FRAME WOULD STALL CONFERENCE MOMENTUM, PERHAPS PERMANENTLY, AND THAT IT MIGHT THEN BEGIN TO RESEMBLE THE CCD.

5. SOVIETS WERE OBVIOUSLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE GESTURE THIS LUNCHEON REPRESENTED, AND WE BELIEVE IT WILL FACILITATE OUR CONTACTS WITH THEIR DELEGATION AT ALL LEVELS. DALE

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